

REMARKS

In response to the pending Office Action, Applicants have amended claim 1 so as to clarify the intended subject matter of the present invention. In addition, new claims 16 and 17 have been added to recite additional aspects of the present invention not previously claimed. No new matter has been added.

With regard to the pending rejection of the claims, it is noted that the only rejection pending is a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based in part on USP No. 6,808,997 to Jain. However, Jain is not valid prior art relative to the instant application. The effective filing date of Jain is March 21, 2003. The effective filing date of the instant application is March 4, 2003, based on the claim of priority to JP 2003-056860. A certified translation of JP 2003-056860 is being filed concurrently herewith in order to perfect the claim of priority. Thus, as Jain does not represent valid prior art with respect to the instant application, it is respectfully requested that the pending rejection be withdrawn.

Having fully responded to all matters raised in the Office Action, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance, an indication for which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

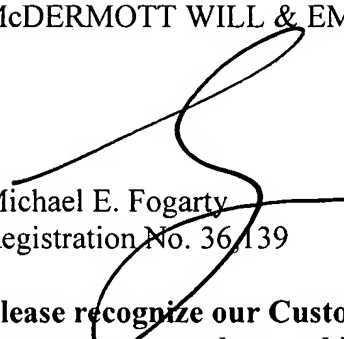
To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper,

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including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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